DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 303 188 IR 052 648

AUTHOR Hanson, Charles D.
TITLE The Language of Library Leadership: Effective Communication.
PUB DATE 10 Jul 88
NOTE 32p.; Paper presented at the Library Administration and Management Association President's Program at the Annual Convention of the American Library Association (New Orleans, LA, July 10, 1988).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Communication (Thought Transfer); *Communication Skills; Humor; *Leadership Qualities; *Leadership Styles; *Librarians; *Library Administration; Listening; Models; Personnel Evaluation

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the role of communication in library leadership. The discussion is organized into 14 sections: (1) multidimensional approaches to effective leadership communication and varying communication style to the situation; (2) the importance of conciseness; (3) streamlining library communication; (4) the vision being communicated by library leaders; (5) simplification of library communication and avoidance of jargon; (6) listening as an essential part of communication; (7) qualities of effective communication; (8) the importance of clarity of language; (9) humor and participatory management; (10) leading by example; (11) motivation, values, and time related to leadership communication skills; (12) personnel evaluation; (13) a library communication model; and (14) communicating about librarianship. (42 references) (MES)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED303188

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

THE LANGUAGE OF LIBRARY LEADERSHIP: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Charles D. Hanson, Ph.D.
Director of Libraries
Grosse Pointe Public Library
Grosse Pointe, Michigan
July 10, 1988

IR053648

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Charles D.Hanson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

THE LANGUAGE OF LIBRARY LEADERSHIP: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Abstract

Perhaps no area of library leadership receives so much criticism as the area of communication. A library is a human communications network, with library personnel who have different needs, attitudes, and abilities.

Leaders with effective communication skills vary their communication style, emphasizing empowerment at the grass roots level. Language and communication should be streamlined (less is more) for efficiency and impact.

Library leaders must communicate a vision which is based on perspective and respect. That vision should be presented without jargon or ineffective messages. The ability to listen is the key to good communication; a good listener understands what is being stated, both verbally and nonverbally. In communicating the leadership message the sender must encourage the receiver to act ("I am able") through positive reinforcement and through clearly-defined expectations.

Effective communication should appeal to both sides of the brain. Humor and participatory management encourage participation, while trust and the delegation of responsibilities encourage library team building. Library leaders must be willing to take risks and to keep the channels of library communication open. They must provide motivation and yet avoid a rigid stand ("shotgun") which can be counterproductive to the library organization and to good use of time. This blending of qualities in the ideal library leader hedges on one very important quality: the ability to communicate effectively.

Evaluating library performance is an important part of effective communication, offering an opportunity for praise and criticism. Library leaders must learn through awareness the best communication model which effectively promotes teacher-learner behavior, striving at all times to make effective communication an art. Above all, making one's meaning clear is an essential communication skill.

Library leaders must offer a library language that addresses proactive communication skills. Effective leadership communication is responsiveness, closely linked to creativity. Library leaders must speak eloquently for library values. Growth as a communications leader consists of more than a series of memos or a batch of directives.

Growing to greatness as a library communicator is a never-ending process.

THE LANGUAGE OF LIBRARY LEADERSHIP: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

"I don't know what you mean by your way, said
the Queen, "all the ways about here belong to me..."
Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking Glass

THE CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

Perhaps no area of library leadership receives so much criticism as the area of communication. Demands for better communication between and within library departments, for more openness between personnel and the director, and for greater input into the dynamics of the library organization occur frequently in libraries. Quite often the feeling is that library leaders speak like the Queen of Hearts in Carroll's Through the Looking Glass, communicating from the top down, so that "all the ways about here belong to me." How can we provide for better library communication without a loss of privacy, the creation of a paper-cluttered world, or a world of endless chatter? How, too, can we prevent the abuse of communication, which could turn it to bad ends? As one of Shakespeare's characters states, "The abuse of greatness is when it disjoins/Remorse from power." Certainly improved communication must be a goal of every effective library leader. Many of us remember the words spoken by the prison warden in the movie Hud: "What we have here is a failure to communicate." This failure to communicate is reflected in the business world where the estimates for the

costs of ineffective communication range as high as $100 billion a year.[1]

Library communication is essentially no different from other types of business communication. It is a human act involving a sender (speaker) and receiver (listener). It is a dynamic act, interactive, and, when most effective, based on dialogue which in turn creates a proper action. It is a given that communication does not exist in a vacuum, but is part of a social matrix. A library is a human communications network, with library personnel who have different habits, needs, attitudes, and abilities. As the forces creating pressure upon libraries become more extreme (these pressures being technological, funding, networking, staff evaluation), the necessity for effective communication becomes more pronounced. Communication is a forum for the articulation of concepts, one that permits in the words of the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, the articulation of "all things counter, original, spare...." Its importance cannot be emphasized enough, for as Herbert S. White has pointed out "communication shortcomings lie at the root of the great majority of management problems."[2]

MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACHES TO EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

Librarians are not the only professional group these days talking about leadership and communication, though it is commonly accepted that every library job description carries

with it emphasis on communication as a job requirement. For example, a recent study of school principals noted that 60 to 70 percent of a principal's daily activities "fell under the heading of communicating...and that these interactions were informal, brief, and fragmented...few exchanges were longer than ten minutes."[3] Within a library leader's day, frequent interruptions seem to be the fare of every sender. As a result of these interruptions, communication exchanges may become muddled. The receiver frequently takes away mixed messages.

Consultant Kenneth Blanchard maintains that, if the sender wishes to influence in an effective way, that person must concentrate on the behavior of the receiver.[4] He points out that there are two types of behavior: directive behavior is one-way communication in which the leader tells the followers "what to do, where to do it, when to do it, and how to do it. The three operative words for directive behavior are structure, control, and supervise." Supportive behavior permits the leader to engage in two-way communication which "provides support and encouragement; facilitates interaction; and involves the followers in decision making. The three operative words for supportive behavior are praise, listen, and facilitate."

Leaders with effective communication skills have long known that it is important to vary the communication style to the situation. An administrator presenting a proposal for a new computer system to a board of trustees utilizes a

different approach than the library administrator,who is counseling a staff member. A library director explaining a library policy to a disgruntled patron speaks with a style different from that used in speaking with a maintenance person about the procedure for setting up the meeting room.

The leadership style of communication may vary between the two approaches, directive or supportive, resulting in that message which is most effective for that situation; at its most basic, "different strokes for different folks" according to a leader's modus operandi. Management consultant Clayton Sherman cautions, however, that "Some people literally do not understand what it is you're saying. You can tell them there's a problem - and internally they are not going along, even though they might be nodding their heads."[5] He notes that standards of performance must be communicated. Likewise, "selling the library program" remains one of the tests of the efficacy of a library leader's communication skills.

Therefore, it is essential that the denotative and connotative value of the words chosen when relaying a message be clear and precise. The sender's obligation is to make the message understandable! It is never the receiver's responsibility to interpret the message. For example, I once had a difficult time getting my message across to a staff secretary who insisted on placing her office chair and desk in a position with her back toward anyone who came into the office. Only after I had explained

the consequences of her furniture arrangement - that the person entering the room felt ignored, that there was not a friendly recognition of service - did she modify her pattern and move her desk to face the public.

LESS IS MORE WHEN COMMUNICATING LEADERSHIP IDEAS

Library leaders should have improved communication as a stated goal. Some leaders interpret this to mean more is better: more meetings, more memos ("more M & M's," as one of my staff calls them). These are often not effective communications. The library leader who rules by memos, who continues to drone on at staff meetings, the constant verbalizer is less effective than the leader who is succinct. Overemphasis on structure and "the last word" can make policies and procedures nothing more than cumbersome documentation rather than staff-generated input and ownership. There is also the danger that in making communication too verbose library leaders may be so devoted to this goal that there will be little time left to actually do anything. (Just as some are engaged in perpetual long-range planning but never complete the pragmatic work.)

Effective communication, like management, may lie in the process of gaining control by giving up control, a Zenlike concept. This presupposes, however, a level of sophistication on the part of the communication leader. Most library leaders simply "give up" or "give in" to pressure. When the

stakes are high, when demands must be met, when deadlines are imminent, direct communication becomes even more important in one's routines. Yet nothing is as simple as it seems, most notably a command of effective communication skills. As the English poet Robert Graves stated, "There's a cool web of language winds us in."

STREAMLINING LIBRARY COMMUNICATION FOR EMPOWERMENT

How is communication to be streamlined? How do we simplify structure and eliminate bureaucratic rules? Communication when initiated at the top allows for responsibility for the action of that communication at the grass roots level, where true empowerment occurs. This action is reflected in site-based budgeting, for example, where each library department is given responsibility for making decisions about budget as close to the environment in which it occurs as possible. Some communication experts maintain that "the manager's job is to establish the boundaries around a fairly broad space. The individual's responsibility is to find the best way of doing things within that space." [6] Hence the productivity and service of a reference department is tied to the empowered individuals working within that department who assume ownership for the outcome of the work.

It probably does little good, however, for library leaders to express their belief in <u>empowerment</u> when the accompanying resources are not provided. The technical

services department needs a budget which will permit them to carry out their functions; the reference department must have a topnotch reference collection in order to provide excellent service.

Language, too, should be streamlined and precise. Clear, precise speech discourages flip-flopping on an issue and encourages the use of language to bring to light the truth. Streamlined communication can be compared to a haiku, a form of poetry that is compressed and suggests so much that more words would lessen its meaning. A control of diction is a search for the right word with the exact meaning, of not putting words between the truth and ourselves. Far too often, those who have nothing of substance to communicate practice the art of rhetoric. Library leaders know that they are responsible for promoting the library as an information-rich resource. The statement has been made that our society is information-rich but knowledge poor (one of the premises of Theodore Roszak's book, The Cult of Information). When it comes to clear, potent communication skills, the volume of words has little to do with the motivation toward action described by the message. If library leaders can communicate quickly as well as clearly, the action will occur in a more timely manner and will lead to streamlined performance. It does not mean that communication will necessarily occur even with the right information. What do we want? "Just the facts, ma'am, just the facts," without any negative connotations.

LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION: A VISION OF DELIGHT

Clarity of words and communication of vision are inseparable. Every library leader communicates a sense of purpose and direction - either verbally or nonverbally. One business leader asserts that "sharing of vision is the highest principle of management. That is leadership."[7] But good leadership involves delivering a message in a timely manner, with the end result being a call for action ending in results. Should the leader overstate the message, the vision of the message may be lost. What is the vision being communicated? The secret to effective communication, as in good salesmanship, is to get the message across with no negativity involved. What type of message must library leaders deliver in order to motivate library staff toward excellence of service and product?

Library leaders sell the vision of effective, productive library systems almost exclusively through communication. In a sense all communication is "in process," for it means constant re-thinking and re-evaluating. This communication brings vision into focus. Great leaders communicate a vision: the ALA president communicates the direction of ALA; leadership forums present opinions on what candidates for office wish to offer the membership (including ALA presidential candidates offering their vision of ALA's future).

Linked indelibly with vision is a sense of perspective.

Perspective is a capability which comes with experience, but is a necessary, expected quality of library leadership. There is a basic energy born out of the creative power of perspective--that of ideas, of trust, and of integrity. However, many leaders do not lead; they simply follow staff or public opinion. Effective leaders are "...not necessarily popular. They want to take us somewhere, and some of us don't necessarily want to go there."[8] The race is not necessarily to the swift but to the sensible. Lewis Carroll wrote in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, "take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves."

Library personnel not only want a vision, but want to respect that vision. For too long, the vision that library personnel have had of library leaders has been tarnished by those leaders' inability to give clearly directed instructions, to convey information precisely, to make requests which result in timely action or, in some cases, to communicate library needs to the outside world. It would certainly appear that a darkening of the vision was brought home in 1984 when the United States Department of Education issued A Nation at Risk, complete without a mention of the library's role in national education. True, library leaders quickly responded with Alliance for Excellence,[9] a librarians' response. But it seemed to have arrived too late to bolster some of our confidence in both library leadership and effective communication skills.

Fortunately, some library leaders have recovered from

that sin of omission. Recently, for example, Marilyn L. Miller presented her powerful statement on the importance of school library media centers to a Senate subcommittee.[10] Library leaders now participate in the annual Library Legislative Day in Washington, D.C. More are unafraid to speak of library ideals and readers' rights - witness Judith Krug of the ALA Intellectual Freedom Office - rather than give into the censor, to fail to uphold free access to libraries, or to base decision on whimsy or fashion.

There is always a danger that, in spite of the Library of Congress's massive presence in the city of Washington, D.C., that our national library vision will not be communicated. James Madison once wrote that "A popular government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or, perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives." Effectively controlled, positively reinforced communication is that power.

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION: SIMPLIFIED OR SIMPLISTIC?

If there is one basic precept about effective library communication, it is that the message must be simplified, not simplistic. We in libraryland still go around speaking a type of Orwellian Newspeak. We speak of retrospective

conversion (as though it were a new religion), of COM catalogs, of CD-ROM and other technology, and expect that we are communicating. To a large extent we are...with ourselves. For a time some library staff saw the designation MARC and asked, MARC who? Certainly no profession is without its list of buzzwords. Techies speaking computerese ("Now try a cold boot") are often viewed as the leaders in their profession; and perhaps these are the people who indeed guide our destinies. But there is a need for enhanced communication that is effectively intelligible. K.I.S.S., the acronym for "keep it simple, stupid," is a helpful, if at times humbling, reminder.

Jargon and growing reliance on computers have created a communication block. The use of technological words or jargon impede the flow of effective messages. They add nothing to the information being shared and may indeed prevent any decisive action being taken by the receiver. The computer distances us from the source. Leaders may treat staff members in the same way as they treat the cold mechanics of technology, taking little note of personal feelings or conditions. Worse, relying on technological language may foster a solution which is too simplistic, totally at odds with an understanding of the humanistic services and the human complexities so necessary for effective library communication.

COMMUNICATION BY LISTENING

Yet the goal of speaking the truth, which is the purpose of all libraries, should not be forgotten. Up to this point, we have been speaking of the leader as a good sender of messages. Being a good listener is the other essential part of communications and should not be forgotten. Thomas Jefferson was fond of saying, "Here [the University of Virginia] we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it." The library leader is a truth seeker, and a listener, someone who delays responses until the facts are clearly understood. In a survey conducted by Padgett-Thompson in 1985, 1,000 respondents were asked to name the three qualities of a good boss that enhanced on-the-job satisfaction. The results demonstrated that 27 percent wanted a boss who provided freedom for independent action (the sense of empowerment mentioned earlier), while 23 percent noted that an ideal boss "listens to staff, is accessible, has open-door policy."[11]

The key to powerful communication lies in listening. Or, as one library director remarked, "I communicate by listening." It takes, however, a sense of security to communicate by listening. Moreover, it takes a sense of self and knowledge of what good leadership is all about. John Heider points out that "Enlightened leadership is service, not selfishness. The leader grows more and lasts longer by placing the well-being of all above the well-being of self

alone. Paradox: By being selfless, the leader enhances self."[12] One need only read the program offerings for conferences and see that "How to Deal With a Problem Boss" is a popular subject because many library leaders do not have the communication skill to listen effectively. A good listener is one who hears what is being said but also understands what is being stated, both verbally and nonverbally (metacommunications).

COMMUNICATING THE LEADERSHIP MESSAGE: I AM ABLE

In order for communication to be effective it must be:

Understandable: The intent of the speaker must be easily understood, with no buzzwords, jargon, or unclear messages.

Believable: the communication must be acceptable to the personal value system (credibility) of the speaker and of the listener. There must be no sense of power-seeking; only the message is the media.

Achievable: Communication should encourage creativity and discourage negativity. It should be positive in its intent and action, success-oriented. Many library workers fall back on worn phrases ("We've tried that before; it won't work here") when a goal seems unobtainable.

Desirable: Does this fit with the concept of library service? will it be worth doing? Does it promote a sense of self-worth in the process?

Controllable: Communication is directed speech. It is

not random, sporadic, and nonsensical. It should have impact and power; it would be timely and not wasteful of energy. It must use established channels of communication. It should encourage participation/feedback and discourage responses such as "I was caught off guard. I was blind-sided." It should not have a revenge motive.

All these terms convey a sense of able; that is, I can do (it).

Everyone wants to communicate effectively, but often we are too busy or too distracted to achieve that desired end. Peter Drucker has noted that "If there is any one 'secret' of effectiveness, it is concentration. Effective executives do first things first and they do one thing at a time."[13] So too with communication. Effective communication skills require a logical progression of thought. The receiver of the message must feel that acting on the message will create a sense of pride, self-esteem, and will avoid conflict. The receiver must believe that by proceeding expeditiously it is self-actualizing (to use Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation) to perform the stated request.

COMMUNICATING LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS: WHAT DID YOU SAY? WHAT DID YOU MEAN?

Communication which is misdirected or misunderstood can be problematic. Note, for example, this invitation to a fine arts program: "You may pick the tickets up either the day of the event or the day prior, whichever comes first."[14] Would we

be surprised to "hear ourselves as others hear us?"

Of course the use of obtuse language is also a barrier. Most things printed by the U.S. government are impossible to understand. "A Bureaucrat's Guide to Chocolate Chip Cookies,"[15] which asks the baker to "associate key chocolate and nut subsystems and execute stirring operations," is an excellent example of obfuscation. Then there is the Iowa farmer who wrote the county commissioner to find out if a paint he was going to use was safe. The commissioner provided a series of obscure, jargon-filled responses; e.g., "Temporal necessities predicate that application be neutralized negatively." After lengthy correspondence because of the farmer's inability to understand the message, the correspondence culminated in a final, precise message from the commissioner: "Don't use it. It eats the hell out of your pipes."[16]

Too often the communication in libraries comes in after the fact, when a staff member must be reprimanded for not achieving a desired result. Staff members not only need to be spoken to and listened to, but they expect clear direction and guidance when performing tasks. No wonder so many say "I didn't know that is what you wanted; tell me what you want." As Herbert S. White points out, "It is not usually their actions or decisions that get managers into difficulty with staff members...it is a failure to explain, a failure to specify intent and a failure to convince others that decisions have been carefully thought out."[17] No library

leader should settle for less than topnotch performance, but no leader should expect that performance without precise communications.

Consultant Robert Half believes that it is important to "spell out assignments" and "publicize company goals."[18] Library leaders, busy with day-to-day demands, often forget that the unproductive worker may be unproductive because the job responsibilities are not clear. If tardiness on the job is a problem, the simple solution may be to say, "Be on time!", but the effective communication is far more involved than that brief directive. Communication must make the corrective behavior a desired action through positive reinforcement, not fear of punishment or reward. Any library leader knows that the most important person in the organization is the happy, satisfied, productive employee. One of the signals of an unproductive environment, Half notes, is "any sudden and substantial rise - or decline - in the amount of communication between employees and management."[19]

COMMUNICATION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BRAIN: HUMOR AND PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT

Frequently, scant attention is paid to both the reasoning (cognitive) and emotional (affective) content of communication. When library leaders are convinced of the importance of their "mission" - providing and promoting library services to everyone - the resulting communication is

directed to the cognitive side of the brain. The result is often rigid, narrowly focussed, serious, and dull. Instead of appealing to curiosity, openness, experimentation and innovation, the appeal is often stoical, self-contained, tough.

Norman D. Stevens, an academic library director, places great value on humor and creativity. "The careful and appropriate use of humor can... go a long way towards creating a climate in which creative and innovative ideas have a better chance of being put forward and given serious consideration."[20] Effectively controlled levity can ease tension and provide a release value for any strained communication. This technique encourages staff to understand the message in a positive atmosphere.

In addition, more attention is being paid to the role of participatory management, which provides communication channels for staff involvement in decision-making. Libraries are now involving all levels of staff, in the form of advisory committees, to promote better communications, both intra-group and interdepartmental. One of these examples occurred at North Texas State University where junior staff members were introduced to the administrative process;[21] another took place at Tulsa Public Library where staff were asked to share in the budgeting process.[22]

This involvement through participatory management provides a heightened sense of responsibility for completion of tasks (empowerment) and for the fulfillment of a staff

member's set of values and beliefs. It allows communication to occur at many levels, avoiding all "the rules for stifling innovation,"[23] which are described in Rosabeth Moss Kanter's book, The Change Masters. Good communication must appeal to both sides of the brain. There must be opportunity for risk-taking, for creativity, and for innovation.

LIBRARY TEAM BUILDING THROUGH COMMUNICATION: LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Effective communication must be based on trust and the establishment of trust, so that responsibilities can be delegated and so that the development of the library's most valuable resource, its staff, can occur. The leader must be capable of conveying clarity and vision so that the overall goals of the organization are articulated and everyone on the library team understands the overall mission of the library. That trust is conveyed by delegation and empowerment. More often, how a person is told is as important as what the person is told. The one word summing up communication delivery is attitude. Clement Stone stated that "there is little difference in people, but that little difference makes a big difference. The little difference is attitude, and the big difference is whether it is positive or negative." Herbert S. White confirms that attitude is important: "Intra-group communication is subject to a number of factors, including jealousies and rivalries, conflicts over authority and the fear that good ideas are stolen if freely divulged."[24]

With massive changes occurring within libraries, technological automation being the major one, it is understandable why staff may oppose change. Jay Daily has summed up many of the conflicts that evolve in the area of library automation. He notes that "the major difficulty of any kind of administration is summed up in the word communication."[25] In short, an effective leader must be able to get everyone working together, rather than at cross purposes.

How do leaders take risks? Better yet, how do leaders communicate to others that it is important to take risks? Quite often library leaders are not willing to be controversial. Many want to rest secure in a point of view that cannot be disputed, attacked, or controverted. Many fall for easy compromise or, worse yet, expediency, to achieve the end product. Many wait for consensus, rather than being a molder of consensus. Or some wait until all action is "killed in committee." A few may not even profit from the self-knowledge gained by experimentation and thus rob themselves of the opportunity to know themselves and other library staff members through discourse and dialogue. Perhaps many are not astute problem-solvers or good listeners because of distractions about anticipated future problems or cares. As the poet William Wordsworth wrote, "The world is too much with us, late and soon,/Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers." A great leader need not feel that power has lay waste when that power is perceived as effective by the staff who must carry out the action.

In the September 1987 issue of College & Research Libraries a number of articles address the issue of "What Professional Librarians Expect from Administrators." One librarian provides a list of thirteen qualities (stability, leadership, and others), remarking that "in the course of providing leadership, an administrator should not penalize a librarian who may disagree with him or her" because "fear is the worst element that can be unleashed in an organization."[26] Another librarian notes that " the ideal leader is above all a model."[27] Finally, a library administrator notes that "getting librarians and administrators to view their respective roles realistically and work together constructively in a collegial, congenial, trusting partnership would seem to be the top priority."[28] This blending of qualities in the ideal library leader hedges on one very important quality: the ability to communicate effectively. These qualities prevent communication by crisis; i.e., "If there's a crisis, we communicate." Crisis management leads to reactionary and divisive factions, distrust and fear, and misunderstandings.

LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION SKILLS: MOTIVATION, VALUES, AND TIME

Library leadership must provide the working environment and communication channels that provide for good motivation. Leaders can communicate motivation through money, promotion, prestige, recognition, or praise. Yet according to a recent

survey by Wyatt Company Consultants, fewer than 50% of American workers think their bosses properly motivate them, provide regular feedback, or solve "people problems."[29] Pushing and pulling library staff do not work; an open, receptive atmosphere where the library worker experiences self-worth does work.

Stuart M. Schmidt and David Kipnis identify four types of communicators:[30] Shotguns (those who "refuse to take no for an answer"); Tacticians (those who actively try to influence others, relying on reason and logic); Ingratiators (active persuades, relying on flattery); and Bystanders (those who seldom influence, but stand by watching the action). Schmidt and Kipnis assert that there are different combinations of communication methods, not just being "overly assertive as the best tactic." Reason, friendliness, coalition, higher authority, and bargaining also work. They conclude, for example, that the shotgun method "has its long-range costs, including less favorable evaluation, lower salaries, more job tension and greater personal stress." Another article maintains that the 21st Century executive will need "a double dollop of moxie and charisma...must be less a commander than a coach who 'converts people and persuades them to shared values.'"[31] Library leaders must make those values clear and shared.

Effective communication leaders must know the importance of time. Peter Drucker points out that leaders "do not start with tasks. They start with their time."[32] He encourages

leaders to know personal limits. Just how much time is there to communicate? Demands on time can lead to exhaustion and fatigue, which in turn impede communication skills, sometime diluting the message, or creating a sense of futility. It can lead to abrupt messages, like the characters speaking in Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot: Estragon: I can't go on like this./Vladimir: That's what you think."

LIBRARY COMMUNICATION: EVALUATING PERFORMANCE

No area of library leadership is as troublesome as staff evaluation and the evaluation of job performance. Yet staff evaluations involve communication, often the one opportunity to provide the criticism and praise which can result in better job performance. Jonathan A. Lindsey has written that "performance evaluation generates more anxiety in an organization than any other single event during the year."[33] Most library leaders seem torn about giving the right combination of praise and criticism. Consultant Ken Blanchard points out that "Giving an equal amount of praise and criticism may not be enough to save you from being thought of as a bad boss. In most groups, there's a need for four times as many positive interactions--that is, praisings--as negative interactions."[34]

Sheila D. Creth in Effective On-the-job Training: Developing Library Human Resources has developed an extensive review of library training, pointing out the need for a communication model which avoids sending conflicting

messages, one that recognizes that "non-verbal behavior always carries the most powerful message between people."[35] Praise and success are effective communication motivators in libraries as well as in business. There was a time when MBO (Management By Objectives) was accepted as the one operative standard for determining staff evaluations as well as library operations, but this method may have its communication pitfalls because of its rigidity and therefore may not always lead to success.[36] The effective leader provides an opportunity for staff success (therefore, better evaluations) by communicating positive reinforcement to create the desired behavior.

A LIBRARY COMMUNICATION MODEL: LEARNING THROUGH AWARENESS

G. K. Chesterton wrote, "It isn't that they can't see the solution. It is that they can't see the problem." Does this sound familiar in most libraries? Much can be learned about communication models by looking at teaching models. For example, the teaching research of Madeline Hunter,[37] a foremost expert on teacher-learner behavior, offers a teaching model, elements of which might form a library communication model:

1)The objective: Is the message to be conveyed to the receiver clear? Hunter notes that it is inexcusable to arrive at a staff meeting asking, "What are we going to talk about today?"

2)Input: What information is needed by the receiver (listener) in order to achieve the objective? Is

special training required?

3)Modeling: The effective communicator models effective communication. Mentoring, whether as "coach, model, guide, teacher, sponsor, or advisor,"[38] is a valued skill.

4)Checking for Understanding: Is the receiver understanding the message? Is there an indication by nonverbal body signals that something is unclear?

5)Guided and Independent practice: Is there an opportunity to practice communication, to act on the message which produces results? Are receivers encouraged to rely on past, present, (and future) experience?

Many of Hunter's concepts are similar to Tom Peters's concept of "Coaching"--those leaders who "encourage, excite, teach, listen, facilitate"[39]--concepts so brilliantly articulated in A Passion for Excellence.

Hunter is quick to point out that teaching is an art and a science (and we do study Library Science, do we not?). Some people "have a knack" for making communication an art. Library leaders must believe that everyone on the library staff is capable of effective communications. Most of all, more time should be devoted to checking for understanding; that is, taking the time to digest, question, reexamine, and summarize material that is used. In this way, honest, frequent feedback is provided. This avoids an elliptical language such as that expressed by the March Hare and Alice in Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland:

> 'Then you should say what you mean,' the March Hare went on. 'I do,' Alice hastily replied; 'at least--at least I mean what I say--that's the same thing, you know.'

Making one's meaning clear and precise is an essential skill in effective communication.

COMMUNICATING ABOUT LIBRARY LEADERSHIP: THE THIRD WAVE

Peter Drucker has written about the events which have caused dislocation and created discontinuity over the past decade and which make this a turbulent time for decision makers (and, therefore, communicators).[40] John Berry has lamented, when several top posts in libraries were filled by people not in the library field, about the inability of librarianship to communicate "what a librarian is and does."[41] Effective communication is responsiveness and responsibility. Library leaders must offer a library language that addresses market awareness, flexibility, inspiration, proactive communication skills, and the power to build meaningful connections through library networking. They must understand that leadership and communication have strong links to creativity. As Oscar Handlin points out, "Libraries...no longer hold a monopoly on information; a flourishing industry now makes such data available through numerous alternative channels."[42]

That is why to succeed in conveying the library's true mission, library leaders must speak not only eloquently but

effectively for library values. Personal and professional growth in library leadership communication consists of more than a series of memos, a plethora of committee meetings, or a batch of directives. In short, growing to greatness as a library communicator is a never-ending process.

REFERENCES

1. Ron Smith, "Communication Skills: Key Ingredients for Success," Millionaire (March 1988): 34.

2. Herbert S. White, Library Personnel Management (White Plains, New York: Knowledge Industry Publications, 1985), 149.

3. Barbara McEvoy, "Everyday Acts: How Principals Influence Development of Their Staffs," Educational Leadership (February 1987): 73-77.

4. Kenneth Blanchard, "Situational Leadership," Principal (March 1987): 12-16.

5. Clayton Sherman, "Coping With Pain-in-the-Neck Employees," U.S. News & World Report (December 14, 1987): 74.

6. "Empowerment: Helping People Take Charge," Training (January 1988): 63-64.

7. Donald M. Kendell, "The Four Simple Truths of Management: Bridges of Communication," Vital Speeches of the Day (May 15, 1986): 475-478.

8. Herbert S. White, "Oh, Where Have All the Leaders Gone?" Library Journal (October 1, 1987): 68-69.

9. U.S. Department of Education, Alliance for Excellence: Librarians Respond to A Nation at Risk (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984).

10. Marilyn L. Miller, "Statement...before the Subcommittee on Education, Art, and Humanities, Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee on Reauthorization of Chapter 2, Education Consolidation and Improvement Act, July 16, 1987," School Library Media Quarterly (Winter 1988): 122-126.

11. Robert S. Alvarez, Editor. "What's a Good Boss?" Library Administrator's Digest (February 1986): 14.

12. John Heider, The Tao of Leadership (Atlanta, Georgia: Humanities New Age, 1985), 14.

13. Peter Drucker, The Effective Executive (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 100.

14. "Marginalia," The Chronicle of Higher Education (February 24, 1988): A2.

REFERENCES

15. Susan E. Russ of the Washington Post, "A Bureaucrat's Guide to Chocolate Chip Cookies." [Reprinted as a handout]

16. Ron Smith, "Communication Skills: Key Ingredients for Success," Millionaire (March 1988): 35.

17. Herbert S. White, Library Personnel Management (White Plains, New York: Knowledge Industry Publications, 1985), 149.

18. Robert Half, "How to Get Your Employees to do What They're Suppposed to do" (New York: Robert Half International, Inc., 1984), 1-16. [Booklet]

19. Ibid., 13.

20. Norman Stevens, "Humor and Creativity," College & Research Libraries News (March 1988): 145-146.

21. Margaret E. Galloway, "Introducing Junior Staff to the Administrative Process," College & Research Libraries News (December 1987): 687-688.

22. Jan Keene, "The Equal Distribution of Dissatisfaction," Library Administration and Management (January 1988): 32-35.

23. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, The Change Masters: Innovation for Productivity in the American Corporation (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 101-102.

24. Herbert S. White, Library Personnel Management (White Plains, New York: Knowledge Industry Publications, 1985), 151.

25. Jay E. Daily, Staff Personality Problems in the Library Automation Process (Littleton, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, 1985), 4.

26. Cheryl A. Price, "What Professional Librarians Expect from Administrators: One Librarian's View," College & Research Libraries (September 1987): 408-412.

27. Deborah Fink, "...Another Librarian's View," College & Research Libraries (September 1987): 413-417.

28. Brian Alley, "...An Administrator's Response," College & Research Libraries (September 1987): 418-421.

29. "Business Bulletin," The Wall Street Journal (December 22, 1987): 1.

REFERENCES

30. Stuart M. Schmidt and David Kipnis, "The Perils of Persistence," Psychology Today (November 1987): 32-34.

31. "The 21st Century Executive," U.S. News & World Report (March 7, 1988): 48-56.

32. Peter Drucker, The Effective Executive (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 25.

33. Jonathan A. Lindsey, ed., Performance Evaluation: A Management Basic for Librarians (Phoenix, AZ: The Oryx Press, 1986), vii.

34. Dr. Ken Blanchard, "Praise and Criticism: Finding the Right Ratio," Today's Office (December 1987): 14-16.

35. Sheila D. Creth, Effective On-the-Job Training: Developing Library Human Resources (Chicago: The American Library Association, 1986), 63.

36. Joseph A. Ruef, "The Pros and Cons of Management by Objectives," Library Administration and Management (January 1988): 40-41.

37. Madeline Hunter, "Staff Meetings that Produce Staff Development," Principal (January 1988): 44-45.

38. Deanna L. Roberts, "Mentoring in an Academic Library," College & Research Libraries News (February 1986): 117-119.

39. Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, A Passion For Excellence (New York: Random House, 1985), 324.

40. Peter Drucker, Managing in Turbulent Times (New York: Harper & Row, 1980).

41. John Berry, "The Unknown Librarian," Library Journal (May 15, 1987): 4.

42. Oscar Handlin, "Libraries and Learning," American Scholar (Summer 1987): 205-218.